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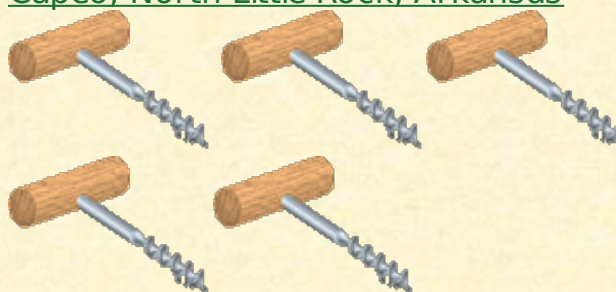
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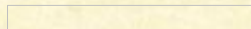
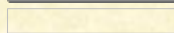
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After a lengthy layoff, incredible how much time a relocation takes, my New Year's resolution was to get back to writing about some of the wines, good and bad, that I've come across. Now that I live amongst the many vineyards of Northern Virginia, yes, Virginia has vineyards, I'm motivated to share some of my discoveries, as well as some of the duds I've come across. All that being said let's get busy. Over the Christmas holidays I found myself back in Arkansas visiting relatives and had the opportunity to dine at [Ristorante Capeo](#) in the Argenta section of North Little Rock, Arkansas. Yes, North Little Rock actually has sections! There were four in our party and much good food was consumed. If you ever find yourself in North Little Rock/Little Rock, they are two separate cities, stop by and try their Lamb Shank, Double Cut Pork Chop, Chilean Sea Bass or their Halibut, all of which are excellent. I personally had the Pork Chop which was finished with a brandy and parsley butter that just made the dish. Of course the chop was man-sized which is not a bad thing. My only complaint about this restaurant is that their pacing is just a little off. There was enough time between the appetizers and the main courses that we ended up buying a second bottle of the 2007 Schug Carneros Pinot Noir and then a third about half way through our entrees. Come to think of it, their slow pacing may be by design? An excellent, excellent Pinot Noir that I highly recommend. A full nose of cherries and oak greeted me followed by flavors of blackberry, a little currant and a smoothy, is that a word?, oak flavored spicy kind of thing and a simply wonderful finish. Not sure what this cost in the restaurant as the uncle-in-law treated on this night but shows availability at the winery website at \$24.00 which is outside my day-to-day price point but fits nicely in my "special occasion" range. Right out of the box I gave this one 5 Corkscrews, which was a huge increase in my rating of the 2005 Schug Pinot Noir. Evidently the grapes that went into the 2007 bottling had a much better growing life than the 2005's. Sit Long, Talk Much, Laugh Often, and Find the 2007 Schug Pinot Noir somewhere!

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2006 NO SAUVIGNON BLANC



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If you've read any of my posts in the past you know that I've written positively about wines that pass on the over use of oak and other California techniques. The 2006 NO Sauvignon Blanc, that I picked up for \$6.99, is one of those Healdsburg, California wines that passed on the Oak aging and malolactic fermentation. Lots of crisp notes of vanilla, melon, lemon-lime and grass. Just a very nice, fresh, tasty wine. And a great price. I gave this one 3 Corkscrews based on a decent price and overall enjoyable bottle of wine. Almost 4 Corkscrews but didn't have that little extra umph that I need to see in a wine to give it the higher rating. Sit Long, Talk Much, Laugh Often, Drink Wine!

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Bloomberg

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Wall Street Journal

By JEMIMA SISSONS Wine cellars, once hidden away, have now come above ground and are increasingly a must-have for those who can afford them. ...

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Some of My Favorites

2002 Beaucanon Chardonnay
A to Z - Pinot Gris
Coppola Black Label - Claret
Diamond Ridge - Cabernet Sauvignon
Domaine Alfred Pinot Gris
Elk Grove Vineyards - Pinot Gris
Fappiano - Zinfandel
Kunde - Chardonnay
Les Tourettes Vine De Pays
Vaucluse
Mark West - Chardonnay
Mountain View - Chardonnay
Renwood - Syrah Rose

favorite store for life! I picked this one up for \$6.99 and was blown away by the flavors. A beautiful light, yellow-green color in the bottle I poured this once and let it settle for 10 minutes or so. On the nose a little floral notes but mostly tropical fruit. On the nose I noted flavors of peach and tropical fruits like kiwi and melon. Nice light finish made me want more of this one and I had a chance to enjoy this one for a couple of days. I noted that it is imported by Dionysos Imports out of Lorton, Virginia so don't know how readily available it is in the rest of the country. I picked this one up in Gainesville, Virginia but I still recommend trying to find a bottle of this. I gave it 4 Corkscrews based on the great price and easy drinkability. Sit Long, Talk Much, Laugh Often, Drink Carta Vieja!

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[2006 TAFT STREET PINOT NOIR](#)



Well, I splurged on this one and it didn't pay off. Have you ever noticed how wine that tastes so good when being sampled at the store can end up tasting so bland when you get it home? What's that about? The [Total Wine & More Store](#) in Fredericksburg, Virginia was sampling this 2006 Taft Street Pinot Noir a few weekends ago and the sampling I had tasted decent. And they were offering a \$1.00 off coupon so it had to be good. Right? Wrong! I shelled out \$15.99 for this bottle and was met with one bland glass after another. Nothing much on the nose and no fruit that I could really identify on the tongue. I gave this one several days to change my mind but it just couldn't. It didn't get worse but it definitely didn't get any better and I tried it at different temperatures and different breathing times. I gave this one 2 Corkscrews because I didn't pour it down the sink, couldn't bare to at that price, but might have been tempted to had I paid a little less. Avoid this one. Sit Long, Talk Much, Laugh Often, Drink Good Wine, Not This One!

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